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ABSTRACT

This teaching guide presents materials to help driver education teachers develop classroom discussions designed to raise students' consciousness of themselves, their interactions with others, and the resolution of traffic situations. Small group discussions in the recommended approach. To develop and maintain a conducive classroom atmosphere, these ideas are suggested: the teacher as a model, student involvement, helping students find their own answers, and clarifying interactions. Suggestions are also given for initiating the learning experience. Student activities designed to provide experience and stimulate reflection on three factors influencing the value of the discussions--trust, perception of another's expectations of oneself, and communications--are detailed. A final section, entitled Deciding How to Decide, presents situations to promote personal consideration and dialogue between students under these topics: (1) To Stop or Not, as regards people with car trouble, hitchhikers, and people at an accident scene; (2) My Rights? Your Rights? Our Rights?, concerning personal freedom and responsibility related to driving (seat belts, safety laws, mass transit, highway safety); (3) The Value of an Accident, advocating constant evaluation of one's driving; (4) Understanding Emotions, about identifying one's emotions and feelings; (5) Dear Ann Landers, providing two letters about some traffic-related dilemma; (6) What Would You Do?, concerning traffic-related situations; and (7) What Kind of Driver Are You?, which is about understanding oneself. (YLB)

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TEACHING FOR SELF AWARENESS AND GROUP INTERACTION

A GUIDE FOR DRIVER EDUCATION TEACHERS

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INTRODUCTION

"We drive as we live" is a concept of driver behavior which attempts to explain why people drive as they do. That is to say, people while driving are continually confronted by situations in which they express feelings, thoughts and values. Decisions of whether to wear a safety belt, let the other driver merge, to drive after drinking, to buy a small car or big car, etc., reflect the priorities a person has established. Unfortunately, for too many people, these priorities have not been established after careful consideration of the consequences, but have unconsciously evolved. The following materials are designed to provide ideas, suggestions and experiences to bring to consciousness personal values and priorities, so they may be examined and evaluated, for these decisions are far too serious to be left to chance.

The materials provide opportunities for students to become involved in dialogues. The dialectic method is used as a major source of self awareness, for whenever a person speaks, he is saying something about himself. The greater the self awarness, the more consistently will a person's behavior result from a rational perspective. Sharing ideas, thoughts and feelings is not without its risks. Taking risks, however, allows a person to learn and grow.

Viewing an individual's behavior often presupposes a need to change the behavior observed. And as viewed from the "outside" such a change may appear to be not only desirable but also easily accomplished. From the perspective of the person concerned, however, the behavior-which is based on the unalterable experiences of one's past cannot be changed. Of what value, then, is self awareness via the dialectic process? It brings to consciousness a perspective which allows a person to accept the past as past and unchangeable, and to view the future as a time of growth and life. In this way, the past is reviewed and forgotten, and the future is planned and lived. In simpler terms, each one of us has the ability to decide where he goes from here. If you have done crazy, destructive, self-defeating things in the past, you do not have to do them in the future. You may if you want, but you don't have to.

"Who are you?" and "Where are you going?" is the topic of what follows. The answers are unique to each of us, and represent only one choice from the multitude of alternatives available. On our search for the alternative best suited to each of us, we can come to see what we have known all along: each of us is the best authority on what is right for our individual lives. No one can make our decisions for us unless we allow them to do so.

A BEGINNING

It is hoped that these materials will be of help to driver education teachers in developing discussions in the classroom. The exercises are designed to raise student consciousness of themselves, their interactions with others and of the resolution of traffic situations. The approach suggested of using small group discussions has several advantages; every member of class is both a teacher and a learner, student involvement is enhanced in allowing several students to offer ideas simultaneously, in their respective groups and students are able to interrelate and develop feelings on a personal level.

How will these materials fit into an already overcrowded few hours of classroom time avialable in driver education? A beginning might be to devote the last 15 or 20 minutes on Friday for the personal reflection and discussion of the issues suggested. Adjustments can be made in the length of time and placement with the present course outline as both teachers and students gain experiences.

Experience is a necessary prerequisite to productive group discussion. When students are asked "how they feel" or "what their opinion is," there are no right or wrong answers, and such questions demand that any answer be accepted. Teachers should expect that students will challenge this approach by experimenting with various, sometimes absurd responses. Outlandish or shocking statements are often made to test this effect on the teacher, and to determine whether certain answers are, in fact, expected or preferred. This testing should be viewed as a stage in the learning experience. when students find that they may speak openly and honestly without fear or rebuff, they will generally settle down to more serious consideration of the topic. Both students and teachers will have to work at asking and answering open-ended questions so that ultimately honest and spontaneous discussions will be encouraged by the entire class.

Teaching for Self-Awareness and Group Interaction

The degree to which students grow in self-awareness and their willingness to interact is the degree to which the teacher can create an atmosphere viewed by the students as emotionally safe, and one in which they can trust enough to express ideas, feelings and values. In such a classroom, students come to see that differences are expected, respected, and encouraged; that they will be challenged not threatened; and that learning is regarded as an active process. In such a classroom, inquiry and empathy will abound and students will grow in self-understanding, acceptance of others, and rational decision-making.

The following ideas are offered as considerations for developing and maintaining a classroom atmosphere conducive to self-awareness and group interaction.

The Teacher as a Model

Students learn to respect and accept others by being respected and accepted themselves. The teacher serves as a model for students as they struggle with learning to express respect, kindness, and concern for others. It may be helpful to keep in mind the old saying, "Your actions speak louder than your words." Teacher comments such as, "Thank you for sharing. . .", "I can understand how you feel that way. . ." indicate that what the student said and felt was O.K. and that someone was listening. Teacher responses which do not evaluate what was communicated, (verbally and non verbally) but communicate respect for the individual for having shared what was shared is important in encouraging communication.

Allowing Students to Learn

Perhaps the best description of teaching how to allow students to learn more was given in the following:

Tell me and I will forget;
Show me and I will remember;
Let me and I will understand.

We learn little from the experiences of others, but we can learn a great deal from our own experiences. In the last analysis, people learn and grow from their own efforts. Teachers, through listening and encouraging students to express themselves, will provide needed and necessary experiences for student growth and understanding.

Helping Students Find Their Own Answers

Helping students to find their own answers to their own questions is more meaningful to them than teacher's answers to teacher questions. Non-threatening, open-ended questions such as: "What would you like to know about. . .?", "What was your opinion of. . .?", "How would you respond to. . .?", "Have you considered. . .?", "What do you think will happen if you do that?" encourage students to think and provoke their consideration of alternatives and consequences of their actions. Teachers will need to keep in mind that students need to come to grip with what they feel, think and believe rather than being told what they should feel, think and believe.

Clarifying Interactions

The teacher will need to be alert to those times when a student response is to what the student thought was said, rather than what was said, or the student's response is more what they are feeling about what was said, than what they are thinking. Clarifying questions such as: "Did you say. . ?", "Mike, what did you think Anne said?", "What did Bev say to make you feel as you do?" can help improve communication and understanding in these situations.

In other situations, questions which help students clarify and define their position and at the same time allow them freedom to make their own choices will be helpful: "How did you come to that position?", "What convinced you to believe as you do?", "Have you considered. . .?", "What points would people who disagree with your position give?", "What would convince you to change your mind?"

When people argue, little is communicated and these situations generally result in resentment and defensiveness. The teacher will need to help the students tune into their feelings with respect and understanding, and provide opportunities for their expression in the classroom. Questions such as: "How did you feel when Joe said that?", "What are you feeling right now?", "You feel very strongly about your position." can help students understand that when someone disagrees or criticizes his position it is an expression of that person's thoughts and feelings and not of them.

Getting Started

Self awareness and group interaction will be most productive when each person feels a sense of comfort and acceptance. A feeling of comfort and acceptance can, at least, be promoted by having each student learn the names and something about each person in class. Most people feel more secure and accepting when they are in the presence of people they know. Learning the names and something about each person in class is not easy for anyone, but it is particularly hard for some. It will be important that the teacher serve as a model in this learning experience. The teacher should use students' names and ask students their name if forgotten. In this way, the teacher can legitimize the difficulty of the task and at the same time use it as an approach for learning.

There are many techniques for facilitating students getting to know one another. One method that works well is to have the students sit in a large circle. Starting with the teacher, each person spell his name and share something about himself. Each person takes note and memorizes the names and position in the circle for each person. After three or four meetings every student should be able to identify every other student by name. This may prove to be a time consuming activity, but the time will prove to be well spent as the class grows in comfort and willingness to communicate.

Another approach which can help the students get to know one another is to have each student write his name at the top of a sheet of paper. At the bottom of the sheet the student is to write a statement about himself and in the center of the sheet the student is to draw a picture of himself. The class can share these in the large group or share them in small groups of four or five. Many students will feel more comfortable in sharing in the small group than in the large group. In any case, the writing will provide a vehicle for sharing and can also provide a release of tension.

Understanding Where You Are At Right Now!

Prior to launching into discussions it will be helpful to explore three factors that will have a major influence on the value of the discussions. In fact, these three concepts will affect whether or not discussion can take place at all. The first is trust, another is our perceptions of others' expectations of us, and the third is communications. Time spent in experiencing and reflecting on these three concepts will enhance the value not only of the interpersonal interaction, but also of self understanding.

Trusting

The degree to which a person will become involved in anything is dependent upon the degree to which a person trusts himself, others or the situation. This is particularly true of driving. Just getting into a car demonstrates a trust (in self if you are the driver and trust in another if someone else is the driver) that you will arrive at your destination safely. In interpersonal relationships the degree to which one will share feelings and, especially, personal feelings is directly related to the trust in oneself and the other person. In order to gain a personal experience with trust which can be used by the class to gain some understanding of how trust affects our behavior, the following experience is suggested.

The class is divided into pairs, with one member of each pair designated as the teacher, the other as student. During each experience the student is to remain silent and must keep his eyes closed. The student is asked to stand with his eyes closed. The teacher moves a chair (a desk chair with no arms, auditorium chair) some distance from the student and then proceeds to teach the student to sit in the chair. (If the student touches the chair with his legs, hands or opens his eyes prior to sitting in the chair, the exercise should be started all over again.) Once the student has been seated in his chair, reverse roles and repeat the eperience.

At the conclusion of the two experiences, each person is asked to write the feelings they experienced as a teacher and as a student. Writing out these feelings helps each person reflect on his reaction to the experience prior to sharing these feelings. Once written, each person is asked to share their feelings. After each person has had a chance to share how he felt, the class is asked to generalize the feeling of the class as teachers and as students. (Note: It has been my experience that most people feel reasonably competent as a teacher but very insecure and non-trusting as a student. Generally there are comments which relate to the difficulty of giving and responding to direction. These concerns will be more clearly explored in the experience on communications.)

The following are examples of questions which will help the class consider the concept of trust as it relates to behavior.

When a person is not very trusting, how does this affect his willingness to sit in a chair? How would you describe the relationship of trust to learning in general? (Note: The intent of these questions is to help the class see that if a person is lacking in trust he will learn slowly, if at all.)

If a person has been asked to sit in a chair and he has trusted the teacher; but then when he sat down he fell to the ground because there was no chair. How will this person react to the next person who asks him to close his eyes and sit in a chair? What are some trusting and non-trusting experiences or situations you have had? (Note: The intent of these questions is to have the student explore trust-related experiences at home, in school and other places that influence how we react to others. This discussion may help the class understand why some people are very cautious or reluctant to get involved if they have trusted in the past and have been hurt. The discussion can and should include the feelings of trust-related to emotions (love), as well as physical situations.)

Other questions which would encourage reflections on the concept of risks are:

Some people are very trusting; others are not. Why? What factors influence (promote or discourage) trust? How can trust be developed if it is lost? What responsibility does the person in whom a person has given trust have for the trusting person? (Note: If someone trust another, he is vulnerable. The person who has the trust can hurt (kill) physically or emotionally if he is not aware or is not responsible with the trust another has given him.)

How do you see trust related to driving? Would you trust a drinking person to drive you home? (Note: This discussion could involve the degree of trust—if the driver had one drink, but was not drunk, etc.) Do you trust yourself to drive in a snow storm? Are you willing to trust that the other driver will stay on his side of the road? What would happen to the driver who trusted everyone all the time?

Trusting demands risking, and risking means moving beyond where you are. Risking also means the possibility of pain and the possibility of joy. When are you willing to trust, when are you not willing to trust? There are only personal answers to these questions, but what is essential is that you understand the importance of trust and the responsibility that accompanies being trusted. This is as important in interpersonal relationships as well as in driving.

Thinking

To create awareness and understanding of how come we do what we do, it is helpful to look at how our perceptions influence our actions (behavior). Much of what we do is based on what we think others are thinking. An example: If someone says something to us and we think he is being funny, we respond in one way. On the other hand, if we think he is being smart or cutting, we respond in another way. Note that our behavior is based on what we think the other person is thinking, whether he is thinking that or not. If we know the person well, we may be able to predict quite accurately what he is thinking and our behavior would be appropriate. There are times however where we need to know for sure what the person is thinking, because the consequences of inappropriate behavior may be serious. If I drink because I think you admire me more than if I don't drink; or if I drive 100 mph because I think you respect my daring; or if I give you a present because I think you like me more, my behavior in each of these situations is based on what I feel will please you. If my perception is inaccurate and the other person loses respect for me if we drink, drive 100 mph, or give him a gift, then I am in trouble. Acting on what we think others are thinking is really "peer pressure". We do things we think others will like, but often when we really don't know for sure what they are thinking. Perhaps drinking and drugs fall into this situation most clearly, as in the case in which three people are in a situation where alcohol or other drugs are available. None of the three want any, but each individually thinks the others will ridicule him, not respect him, etc. if he doesn't take some. So each takes some. In this case these people do something they don't want to because they think the other people are thinking something they are not really thinking.

In order to gain insight into this dilemma the following exercise is provided:

"I think, you think" is a discussion technique which helps the student compare his perceptions of what he thinks others think, with what others really do think. Since many traffic-related (especially alcohol) decisions are based on what a person thinks others expect, it is important that he knows, in fact, what others really do think, or expect, of him.

In this experience, each student will write three responses and number them 1), 2), and 3). For number one, each student is asked to write his position on an issue. Would or would not, in favor or not in favor of and a statement of why that is their position. (Issue or situation might be wearing safety belts, giving the keys to a friend if you have been drinking, smoking pot, etc.)

The students are now paired and asked to sit face to face. With no conversation (responses to number one should be kept private) each student is now asked to write for number two what he feels his partners position on the issue is (each person writes for number two what he feels his partner has written for number one and includes a statement of why he feels that is his partner's position.)

After a couple of minutes each student is asked to write for number three what he thinks his partner has written about him, i.e., what his partner has written for number two.

When each person has finished writing, the partners share what he has written, and to see if what he thinks his partner is thinking is what his partner actually thinks. After a few minutes of partner sharing, a group discussion of the experience will be helpful, focusing on: (1.) how accurate they were in predicting what each other was thinking; (2.) personal experience where their behavior was inappropriate related to what they thought someone else was thinking; (3.) this concept related to peer pressure; and (4.) how to improve their behavior related to what they think others are thinking.

"I think, you think" stated another way—"I am not who I think I am; I am not who you think I am; I am who I think you think I am, or I am who I think you want me to be." Obviously, we need to question such self-definitions, but acting on what we think will please others is often necessary. Then to find out what pleases someone else (or what they are thinking), we need to communicate with each other in order to *share our thinking.*

Repeating the exercises on other topics with the same or other people will help the student broaden his understanding. This experience can be used in groups, where each student writes what he thinks the group's position is about a topic and then compare. Also using this exercise with parents can be fun, and can increase understanding of both the students and parents. In all of these situations, it is important also to share not only what the person is thinking, but the reasons you think he is thinking what he is really thinking. (An example—You may accurately think your father will not let you go...however, the reason you think your father has for not letting you go is because of your grades, when, in fact, your father's reason is because he wants to take you out to dinner.

Communicating

Our ability to drive safely, as well as to interact with others is dependent upon our ability to communicate and understand messages accurately. The following exercise is presented to raise student consciousness to the abilities, limitations, and influencing factors of communication.

The students are organized in pairs and asked to seat themselves back to back. Each student is given a sheet of paper and asked to draw five or six geometric figures on the sheet in any way he chooses. (Each student could be given an envelope containing identical cut-out geometric pieces of paper in place of drawing on a sheet of paper.) One of the pair (student nearest the front of the room, nearest the door, oldest, etc.) is designated as the teacher. The other person of

the pair will be the student and is asked to turn the paper to the back side or is given a clean sheet of paper. (If the cut-out pieces of paper are used, the teacher arranges his pieces in some way on his desk.) The "teacher's" task is now to "teach" the student how to draw the geometric figures exactly as they are on his paper (or arrange the geometric pieces as the teacher has arranged them). The student is mute during the exercise, and neither person is to see what the other is doing, until he has finished with the teaching.

When the teacher is finished with the instructions, the partners compare each others' drawings (arrangement) and note differences. After discussing any misunderstandings in communications which occurred, the partners should switch roles and repeat the experiences. (Other variations of this exercise are to allow free discussion between the teacher and learner, or to have a third party construct a drawing or arrangement for the teacher.)

Following the exercise it will be helpful for the class to discuss the factors that influence communications. Such questions as: What communication problems arose?; What factors in communication enhance or improve accuracy or understanding? (examples: vocabulary differences, knowing each other, similar experiences, feelings about each other, ability to listen, etc.); What feelings did you experience as a teacher and as a learner? (How did your feelings affect your teaching? learning?); Have you experienced misunderstandings with others? Explain; How can we improve our ability to communicate with each other?

The discussion could now move to include communicating and its relationship to driving. Relating the picture traffic signs, eye to eye contact, yielding right of way, variation in hand signals (some states have only one hand signal—arm straight out-—and others use three hand signals, etc.).

The need to communicate accurately with car positions, hand signals, traffic signs and signals, road markings, eyes, etc. may have serious and sometimes life and death consequences if we are inaccurate in sending and receiving messages. This old saying expresses the goal of communications:

> "Communicate not to be understood, but so that you cannot possibly be misunderstood."

Deciding How To Decide

Deciding how to decide is no easy task, for just when you feel you have decided, the situation changes or you change, and you need to decide all over again. It is a never ending process in traffic safety situations as it is in medicine and football. Deciding today as was decided fifty years ago, in a heart operation or in football strategy, would be unthinkable. It is equally unthinkable in traffic situations. There are new techniques, skills, laws and people. Each of us need to continually examine our personal feelings, beliefs and values in making traffic decisions to determine how to best accommodate change in making these decisions in the future.

The situations presented are intended to provoke personal consideration of the situation and to promote dialogue between students, so that each student might come to a better understanding of where he is and where he is going. It is hoped that the class will develop other situations to be considered in addition to those presented. As with the surgeon and football player where practice improves performance, so too will there be improved traffic performance of those who practice deciding how to decide in traffic situations.

To Stop or Not

When driving you will often be confronted by situations in which another driver will want you to stop for him. Three common examples are: a person with car trouble, a hitch-hiker, and a person at an accident. In these situations, some people say, "Mind your own business and let people take care of themselves." Other people say that no person is an island unto himself and we should help each other because we need each other.

To explore ramifications of these situations in the classroom, have the students write out how they feel about getting involved in each of the three situations—a person with car trouble, a hitch-hiker or a person at an accident. Ask the students to also describe the reason for whatever action they would take (including not becoming involved).

Following the completion of the student writing the responses to the above questions, show pictures of people (cut from magazines or wherever pictures of a variety of people of various ages, races, physical appearance, sexes, etc. are readily available) —one at a time—to the class. Ask each student to describe the action and the reasons for the action he would personally take if he were the driver of the car and the person in the picture was waving him to stop because of car trouble, the person is a hitch-hiker, or the person was at the scene of an accident. (It is fun to experiment in terms of would they stop for the person in one situation but not in another. Changing the role of persons in the pictures from class to class can also prove informative.)

In small groups have the students share their reactions and feelings to the people in the pictures. (It is important that the students understand that the object of the discussion is to share each other's perception and reaction rather than to try to argue the worthiness of one person's choice over another's.)

Following the small group sharing have the class share the variety of choices and reasons for the actions taken in each situation so they can draw conclusions or make generalizations about their decisions. Of particular concern should be the impact of the conclusion and generalization for traffic safety and for our society in general.

Now have the students reread their responses to getting involved or not that they wrote at the beginning of the exercise. Have them make any changes in their position they feel necessary in light of the discussions. Finally have each student complete these two sentences: "I learned..." and "I learned that I...". These sentences may be shared in small or large groups.

My Rights? Your Rights? Our Rights?

There are many difficult decisions regarding personal freedom and personal responsibility related to driving. Perhaps the most well known decision situation is in regard to safety belt use (driver and passenger restraints). The following exercise is presented to help students gain personal insight into their own position relative to safety belt use. Students will also have an opportunity to view their personal choices in light of other individual's choices and the group's choices. (The two comparisons are intended to help each student view his choice in light of other reasoning. This is to insure that his choice is rational (arrived at after consideration of other alternatives) and to provide opportunities for the selection of a more appropriate choice. This is not to say that any student's position is right or wrong, or should be changed, but to provide a challenge to each person's reasoning for his position to insure he has critically thought through the ramifications of his position.

Each student is to answer the following questions:

1. Do you always wear your safety belt when you are in a car? Explain your reason for doing as you do.
2. Do you ask others in the car with you to wear their safety belts? Expalin your reason for doing as you do.

In small groups have the students share their responses to these questions. (The objective is not to convince each other

of the error of their thinking if it's different, but to share thinking.)

In the large group, poll the responses and the reasons given for the two questions. Categorize responses based on facts (data); based on personal experience; based on what others have said; based on personal preference—convenience, feelings, comfort, etc.; or based on force—buzzer, teacher, parents, law, etc. The class should discuss the poll. (i.e. What seems to be the strongest influence on our use or non-use of safety belts?; How is our behavior influenced by knowledge—information about safety belts, such as reducing death and injury? These and similar questions are intended to help students become aware of what influences our actions. Most often people's behavior in the use of safety belts is like that of smoking, or drinking alcohol, the knowledge that is gained in research and study, in spite of the ramifications, seems to have little influence on many, if not most, people. Why is this so?)

After this discussion ask the students to answer the following question:

Is there anything that would convince you to change your position described in questions (1.) and (2.)? Explain.

Discuss the implications of the responses in terms of personal decision making and traffic safety in general. (If you exercise your right to not wear your seat belt and are subsequently more severly injured because you did not wear your safety belt—what about consideration for my rights? My insurance costs go up, and I now have less money to spend as I wish.)

Safety authorities are working hard to get congress, state legislature and city councils to pass mandatory safety belt laws. They are trying with such a law to reduce the severity of injuries and to reduce the 50,000 plus deaths on the highways.

The authorities present the experiences of Australia in reducing their highway deaths and injuries with such a law as evidence of its value.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has reported that the mail regarding mandatory safety laws is running four to one against such laws.

Reasons for opposing the laws, it was reported, range from those who say that the government doesn't have the right to tell people whether they should wear their safety belts, to those who say that if seat belts are so good, why are they not installed in school buses?

1. How do you feel about the issue of whether or not laws should be passed to force people to be safe?
2. What are your feelings about mass transit systems as an alternative to private car use?
3. What are your opinions about safety belts in school buses and other mass transit vehicles?
4. What alternatives could be considered to improve highway safety?

The Value of an Accident

Many students will come to driver education having personally been involved in a traffic accident (crash), will have personally seen an accident, or will know of an accident which has happened to someone close to them. These experiences are important because they acknowledge that the students have personal experience and knowledge of driving. To recognize their (the student's) personal experiences as important and meaningful is to recognize them as people who are important and meaningful.

Have the students draw and describe an accident. (An example of accident data that would be meaningful in such a drawing and description could be discussed prior to the students doing theirs.) In small groups have the students share these experiences and discuss the following questions relative to each accident:

1. Could the accident have been prevented? (Was there anything that could have been done to prevent the accident by anyone?)
2. How did the people directly involved perceive the situation that led to the action they took? (Note: perception should include self and other people, as well as other non-human factors.)
3. Given the information you now have about the accident, what could each of the persons involved have done to avoid the accident or minimize the consequences?

It is further hoped that in reviewing past experiences (accidents) students will see that each of us needs to continually evaluate our driving to discover how we might improve. One of the goals of this exercise is to help students gain experience and a repertoire of questions to ask themselves about driving experiences so that they can improve.

Note: Some accidents will be difficult to share because of the personal pain that they bring to memory. It is important to point out that experiences are not discussed to rekindle guilt, pain or unhappiness, but that we might learn, improve and grow, and then forget and get on with living.

Understanding Emotions

All of us experience feelings and these feelings affect how we react to people and situations. One psychologist has said, "People act emotionally to situations and then justify their actions with logical reason." The following exercises are presented to help students gain some understanding of their own emotional feelings. It is hoped that students may come to deal with emotions from a position of, "I can help the way I feel, and I can help the way I think and act," instead of, "I am going to act the way I feel because I just can't help it."

Each student is asked to react to the following situations and describe his feelings.

SITUATION A

It has been snowing and the snow is about a foot deep. You drive to a shopping center, park your car and start walking to the stores. Parked in front of the shoveled entrance marked "NO PARKING", blocking the pedestrain walkway is a car. You have to wade through deep snow to get around the car.

1. What are you saying to yourself about the driver?
2. How do you feel?
3. What might you do or say?

SITUATION B

You are driving near a hospital. Suddenly you hear a horn honk just behind you. You glance in your rear view mirror and see a speeding car about to pass you. There is another car coming from the opposite direction on the two lane road. You quickly pull to the right. The car passing swerves around you, almost hitting your front fender and barely missing the on-coming car.

1. What are you saying to yourself about the driver?
2. How do you feel about the situation?
3. What would you do?

SITUATION C

You are approaching an intersection where an accident has just happened. A well dressed older man is standing beside his Cadillac that has a smashed fender. A few feet away are a couple of shaggy-haired teenagers standing next to an old jalopy.

1. What are you saying to yourself about this scene?
2. What are you feeling?
3. What would you do?

In large or small groups, have the students share their responses to the questions asked. It is helpful to list some of the responses for the class to see—on blackboard, overhead, etc. under the following headings:

Saying to self	Feeling	Action
SITUATION A		
1. inconsideration (*!#*!!@$!)	anger	leave a note
2. the driver does not care	mad	tell the driver off
3. I've done the same thing	I don't care	nothing
SITUATION B		
1. ——	——	——
2. ——	——	——
3. ——	——	——
SITUATION C		
1. ——	——	——
2. ——	——	——
3. ——	——	——

Now have each student consider the following additional information and answer the same questions for each situation.

1. What are you saying to yourself about the driver or the situation?
2. How do you feel?
3. What might you do?

SITUATION A'

You find out the driver of the car blocking the entrance was phoning an ambulance to come to an accident.

SITUATION B' The passing car continues past the hospital

- or -

SITUATION B² The passing car turns into the emergency entrance of the hospital.

SITUATION C' The well dressed older man is drunk.

After the students have had time to answer the questions, consider the additional information, add responses to the general class information from original responses:

Saying to self	Feeling	Action
SITUATION A'		
1.		
2.		
SITUATION B'		
1.		
SITUATION B²		
1.		
2.		
SITUATION C'		
1.		
2.		

Using the information recorded regarding what we say to ourselves, our feelings and actions, conduct a discussion to help the students discover that what we say to ourselves produces feelings which result in action or behavior. Referring to situation A, if we say things like "inconsiderate...," we feel mad or angry, and we will say or do something that expresses madness or anger such as tell the person off, leave a sarcastic note, etc. On the other hand, if one says, "That driver must be in a hurry, and I'd have done the same thing myself," you will feel matter-of-fact and probably do nothing. By looking at how what we say to ourselves directly controls how we feel which then leads to our behavior, we can conclude that we can control how we feel and act by talking to ourselves. That is to say, if we do not want to be mad, we can say things that do not make us upset.

The following two lists identify some emotions we have all experienced. Describe what a person is saying to themselves for each of the emotions listed. What is the difference between a person who feels more emotions from List B than from List A? What is each saying to himself? How do these emotional feelings affect the way people drive?

LIST A	LIST B
boredom	affection
jealousy	trust
loneliness	curiosity
inferiority	satisfaction
rejection	contentment
inadequacy	pride
envy	excitement
impatience	acceptance
suspicion	relief
frustration	enthusiasm
discouragement	joy
fear	friendliness
disappointment	hope
anger	confidence
guilt	peace
hostility	exhilaration

If your feelings or actions changed,how come? Looking at the class's responses in these situations, explain why people feel and act as they do. (The object is to help students see that feelings and actions are the results of what we say to ourselves about a situation. If we say one thing, we feel and act one way, but if we say something different to ourselves, we feel and act differently.

We can thus conclude that by talking to ourselves, we can determine how we feel and act, and also we change our feelings and actions by changing what we are saying to ourselves.)

Dear Ann Landers

The various advice columns have become a very popular form in which to raise questions and issues bothering people. This approach can also be used to stimulate discussion of relevant traffic related situations in the classroom. The two letter examples can be used to help students develop their own letters.

The letters are read aloud or reproduced for each student. The students are asked to read the letter and write a response. In small groups the students share their responses and discuss them. Since each person and his relationship with his father and his boyfriend will be different, there are no "right" or "wrong" responses, but a variety of approaches for solving the situation. The value of the discussion is to share reasoning for approaches taken and possible impact of each approach

in the resolution of the dilemma.

The student's written letters can be exchanged between students or written anonymously and exchanged without the responder knowing the letter writer. The letters and responses can be shared in small or large groups. This is a fun and informative experience for both the students and the teacher.

Dear Ann,

I have just finished driver education and I now have my drivers license. My problem is that my Dad says that I can only use the car if I and all the other people in the car have their safety belts on. Some of my friends will never wear their safety belts and will laugh at me if I tell them to put their safety belts on. I don't want to go against my Dad's rule, but I don't want to lose my friends either. What should I do?

Signed,
Confused

Dear Ann,

I have been going with my boyfriend for the past two years, and I really care for him. My problem is that he is really a poor driver. He seldom ever stops at stop signs, he tailgates even on the freeway, and he cuts drivers off at merge areas. When I say anything he just gets mad or irgnores me. I am afraid sometimes we are going to get into a bad accident. He has had several fender benders and has lost his license for three months already. How can I get my boyfriend to be a more safe driver?

Worried Girlfriend

What Would You Do?

Many situations will arise that are difficult to know how to decide. It is, however, helpful to explore how you might handle the situation. In sharing your ideas with others you can better prepare yourself for the time when you are actually faced with the problem. There are no special or specific answers. There are alternatives based on your own personal circumstances and the circumstances of the situation.

The students are asked to write what they would do in each case. In small groups they share their responses and the rationale for their choice. Following the small group sharing, the class can look at the variety of approaches that were considered and reasoning for the approaches.

There are some general questions provided that could be asked following the small group sharing to get the students to view the situation from various perspectives.

I. You and a girlfriend are driving along the freeway about five or six miles outside of Milwaukee at 10:30 p.m. and your right front tire goes flat. You pull the car over to the right side of the road. After checking the tire you go to the trunk to get the jack and spare, but they are not there. What do you do?

1. If no one stops, would you leave the girlfriend and go for help? Explain.
2. Would you signal someone to stop and help you? Explain.

II. A friend, obviously drunk, calls you at 1:30 a.m. and asks you for a ride home. What would you do?

1. How do you feel your parents will react to the situation?
2. What happens to your friend if you say no?

III. You and your friend are driving around town at about 10:30 p.m. Your friend has not been paying attention to his driving and nearly hit another car. Before you know it, a police car is pulling you over. Your friend, in panic, asks you to change places because if he gets another ticket, he will loose his license. What do you do?

1. How will your decision affect your relationship?
2. Would you ask a friend to change places with you if you were in the same situation as this driver? Explain.

What Kind of Driver Are You?

It is essential that all drivers, but especially beginning drivers, learn to assess their strengths and limitations as drivers. This is not a static state, (once determined, it is over) but a continuous process that needs to be employed every time a person drives.

The following exercises are suggested to help students begin the process of self-understanding. Self-understanding is always a difficult task and often painful. Difficult because describing strengths is often considered bragging, conceited, or over confident, and painful because many people find it uncomfortable to learn they need to improve. (Perhaps this dilemma can be seen more clearly when a beginning driver tells a parent how good he is and the next breath tells the parents about the mistakes they make while driving.)

In the first exercise, each student is asked to write on the top half of a sheet of paper all the personal characteristics he possess as a person that will help him to be a safe driver. (The difficulty of the task will be noticeable in the student reaction to this assignment. Some students may not be able to or choose not to write anything. The reactions of students should be discussed at the conclusion of the exercise.) On the bottom half of the paper ask each student to write characteristics of himself that he would like to improve to become a safe driver.

Arrange the students in small groups and ask them to write the names of each of the other group members on the back of the sheet of paper. Under each of the names they are now to list all of the personal strengths they see in that person. (Recognize that this may be hard to do, but encourage them to write whatever comes to their mind. Some students will say they don't know the person or don't know them very well, and therefore, can't write anything. Again recognize that the better you know a person, the better able you are to write about them, but also help them understand that we can see strengths in others by just looking at them. i.e. their smile, physical ability, their voice, their reactions to people, etc.)

In some order, have one person share with the group those characteristics he has written as personal strengths. When the person has finished, each of the other group members share the strengths he has listed of this person. Continue the process until everyone has shared his strengths and learned of the strengths others see in him.

When the sharing of strengths is completed, the students in the same order are asked to share those characteristics of themselves they would like to improve. In this way students can come to see that, in addition to strengths, people also have shortcomings they would like to improve. We are, after all, all imperfect.

At the conclusion of the sharing, the students are asked to describe feelings they experienced during the exercise: feelings when they wrote and shared their strengths; when others were expressing strengths they possess; when they shared characteristics they would like to improve; and when they offered strengths they see in others. The teacher's observations of the student's interaction and actions—verbal and non-verbal—will enhance the discussion. It is helpful for the class to discuss any differences in feelings, for example most people find it easier to share characteristics needing improvement than strengths; many people find it difficult to accept compliments from others and often reject the compliment, etc. Why is this so? Another area for discussion relating to this exercise is the difference between being confident and bragging. (The feelings about oneself experienced in this exercise can be related to driving through

class discussion. Questions like: How would you compare the potential of an accident of a confident driver with a person lacking in confidence? Compare a confident driver with a driver who brags about his driving. How do you differentiate a person who feels good about himself as a person, from one who does not like himself in his driving? How can people learn to help themselves grow in self-confidence as a person and as a driver? How can people help others gain confidence in themselves and the driving?)

In the following exercise the students are asked to complete the following open ended statements.

I am pleased with my driving when...
When someone criticizes my driving, I...
I become frightened while driving when...
Other drivers make me angry when...
The most satisfying aspect of driving is...
My driving would improve if...
I get mad at myself driving when...
The most difficult aspect of driving is...
As a passenger with other drivers, I feel...
When I see a police car, I...

The students share and discus their endings to their statements. Following the sharing and the discussion, each student is asked to describe the implication of his response to his driving, and how he might adjust his driving knowing he has these feelings.

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